

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SAI-01 SAM-01 CU-02 AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8726

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN NY

FBIS OKINAWA

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMIPAC

CHMAAGCHINA

COMUSTDC

CDR USACC TAIWAN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 HONG KONG 0486

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR CH

SUBJ: WEEKLY REVIEW OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA NO. 2

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1.2.3. PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI PASSES FROM THE SCENE

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SUMMARY: THE DEATH OF PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI HAS PREEMPTED PRC ATTENTION TO MOST OTHER MATTERS DURING THE WEEK AND MARKS THE END OF AN ERA IN WHICH CHOU PLAYED A ROLE SECOND ONLY TO MAO HIMSELF. CHINESE REPORTS THAT CHOU HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY ILL SINCE 1972 SUGGEST THAT THE INTERVENING PERIOD HAS BEEN SPENT IN PLANNING SUCCESSION ARRANGEMENTS, SPECIFICALLY THE REHABILITATION OF TENG HSIAO-PING. FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE PROVIDED NO CLUES AS TO REPLACEMENTS FOR THE THREE POLITBURO MEMBERS WHO HAVE DIED IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS BUT THERE ARE SOME SIGNS THAT POLITBURO MEETING WAS ALREADY IN SESSION AT THE TIME OF CHOU'S DEATH. END SUMMARY

1. PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI PASSES FROM THE SCENE

A YEAR TO THE DAY AFTER THE SECOND PLENUM OF THE TENTH PARTY CONGRESS CONVENED TO AFFIRM A VISIONARY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR CHINA OVER THE NEXT 25 YEARS, THE ARCHITECT OF THAT PROPOSAL, PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI, PASSED AWAY. HIS DEATH FROM CANCER AT 78 MARKS THE END OF AN ERA WHEREIN HE EXERTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OF CHINA'S GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY AND PLAYED A ROLE SECOND ONLY TO MAO HIMSELF IN THE FORMULATION OF THE NATION'S DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND POLICIES. THE LENGTH OF HIS ILLNESS, WHICH THE CHINESE DATE FROM 1972, SUGGESTS THAT A LONG PERIOD OF TIME WAS AVAILABLE TO THE CHINESE TO PLAN SUCCESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTICULARLY

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SUGGESTS THAT THE 1973 REHABILITATION OF VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING WAS A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CHOU'S HEALTH.. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

2. CHINESE TRIBUTE TO CHOU HAS SURPASSED ANY PREVIOUS FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS, WITH SPECIFIC FIRST IN THE LENGTH OF TIME OF MOURNING-- SIX DAYS-- PUBLIC VIEWING OF THE BODY OF THE LATE PREMIER, AND TELEVISION COVERAGE TRANSMITTED ABROAD BY

SATELLITE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF WHICH CHOU WAS VERY MUCH A PART. CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN THE TELEVISION PRESENTATION ARE WORTH SINGLING OUT, WITH THE GENUINE GRIEF AND THE OUTPOURING OF EMOTION AMONG THE CHINESE LEADERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC, A SCENE THAT THE CHINESE HAVE ALWAYS KEPT STRICTLY TO THEMSELVES, PARTICULARLY STRIKING. WANG HUNG-WEN'S ENTRANCE WITH POLITBURO ALTERNATE WU KUWI-HSIEN SUGGESTS THAT THE REGIME MAY HAVE BEEN SEEKING TO HIGHLIGHT THEIR YOUTH AND WORKER ROLES AND SERVE TO SOFTEN THE IMAGE OF WANG ENTERING AS THE NOW SECOND -TO -MAO LEADER IN THE PARTY HIERARCHY. CHU TEH'S SALUTE TO CHOU'S BODY, DRAPED IN THE FLAG OF THE EARLY DAYS OF REVOLUTION, WAS A UNIQUE TRIBUTE TO CHOU'S ROLE IN FOUNDING THE PLA, BEGUN BY THEM AND HO LUNG AT THE NANCHUANG UPRISING. PERHAPS MOST STRIKING WAS THE LONG MEETING SHOWN BETWEEN CHOU'S WIDOW TENG YING-CHAO AND CHANG CHUN-CHIAO, SUGGESTING AN INTIMACY AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO MEN THAT WAS CERTAINLY GREATER THAN GENERALLY ASSUMED . LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

3. TO DATE, THE APPEARANCES OF TOP LEADERS HAVE TIPPED OFF NOTHING OF THE FORTHCOMING DECISIONS ON SUCCESSION TO CHOU AND THE OTHER TOP PARTY LEADERS WHO HAVE PASSED FROM THE SCENE SINCE THE LAST PLENUM. HOWEVER, WE SUSPECT THAT POLITBURO MEETINGS HAD ALREADY BEGUN PRIOR TO CHOU'S DEATH (HK 0213) AND THAT A THIRD PARTY PLENUM AND A NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS' STANDING COMMITTEE SESSION WILL BE CONVENED SHORTLY AFTER THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES ARE COMPLETED TO AFFIRM POLITBURO DECISIONS AND TO ANNOUNCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIFTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN (HK 0428). AT A LOWER LEVEL, WE ARE ABLE TO CONFIRM THE TRANSFER OF FORMER SZECHWAN SECRETARY LI TA-CHANG TO PEKING-- POSSIBLY IN A UNITED FRONT WORK CAPACITY (HONG KONG 0294). WE ARE STRUCK ALSO BY THE HIGH PROMINENCE GIVEN TO VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE SU YU IN THE LISTINGS
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OF THE FUNERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE MOURNERS WHICH TO US SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY BE IN FOR A PROMOTION DURING THE UPCOMING LEADERSHIP SHIFTS AND ADVANCEMENTS. CONFIDENTIAL

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

4. THE WORLD MOURNS THE LOSS OF CHOU EN-LAI

AS MOST OF THE WORLD MOURNS THE DEATH OF PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI, PRC MEDIA HAVE CARRIED MANY OF THE CONDOLENCE MESSAGES POURING INTO THE CHINESE CAPITAL, INCLUDING THE TEXT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S MESSAGES TO MAO TSE-TUNG AND CHU TEH, AND THE SEPARATE STATEMENTS ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT AND FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON ON THE PREMIER'S DEATH. AMONG THE MESSAGES CARRIED BY NCNA WERE THOSE RECEIVED FROM THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE PORTUGUESE PRESIDENT, THE PRESIDENT OF THE NEW FRETELIN-PROCLAIMED REGIME ON TIMOR, LEADERS OF SEA NATIONS (EXCEPTING INDONESIA) AND ALL OF THE LENGTHY IDEOLOGICALLY-ORIENTED MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE REGION'S PRO-PEKING INSURGENT/COMMUNIST GROUPS. NCNA ALSO CARRIED THE TERSE THREE-LINE MESSAGE FROM THE SOVIET COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO THE CHINESE STATE COUNCIL REQUESTING THAT ITS SYMPATHY BE CONVEYED TO THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED. AN EQUALLY FORMAL MESSAGE FROM MRS. GANDHI WAS ALSO REPORTED. (NCNA JANUARY 10-14). UNCLASSIFIED

5. THE UNITED STATES

BOTH THE US CONGRESSWOMEN'S DELEGATION AND JULIE AND DAVID EISENHOWER DEPARTED FROM SHANGHAI ON JANUARY 9 AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VISITS TO CHINA. THE EISENHOWERS WERE SEEN OFF BY PRCLO CHIEF HUANG CHEN AND HIS WIFE, WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED THEM ON THEIR VISITS OUTSIDE PEKING, AND BY A STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER OF THE SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE (SMRC). THE CONGRESSWOMEN WERE SEEN OFF BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND BY A "LEADING MEMBER" OF THE SMRC FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION (NCNA, JANUARY 9). UNCLASSIFIED

6. THE SOVIET UNION

CHINA IS UNDOUBTEDLY PLEASED WITH THE LACK OF RESULTS COMING
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OUT OF THE GROMYKO MISSION TO TOKYO AND THE JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER'S SUBSEQUENT REITERATION OF HIS INTENTION TO WORK TOWARD CONCLUSION OF A TREATY OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH PEKING. ALTHOUGH PRC OFFICIALS IN JAPAN WERE ON HAND TO GREET THE NEW DRV CHARGE AT TOKYO'S AIRPORT JUST PRIOR TO THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER'S ARRIVAL, THEY DID NOT REMAIN TO GREET GROMYKO. DURING THE VISIT, NCNA PROVIDED THE EXPECTED HEAVY BARRAGE OF REPLAYS FROM JAPANESE SOURCES OF CALLS FOR THE SOVIETS TO RETURN THE DISPUTED NORTHERN TERRITORIES TO JAPAN. NCNA HAS NOT COMMENTED ON THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS, BUT THE TWO MAJOR PRC-OWNED NEWSPAPERS IN HONG KONG ON JANUARY 14 BOTH TOOK ISSUE WITH GROMYKO'S REMARKS TO THE

TOKYO PRESS THAT CHINA IS SEEKING HEGEMONY. IN A RATHER GLOATING TONE, THE TA KUNG PAO ALSO POINTED TO THE VISIT AS A FAILURE AND NOTED THAT CHINA HAD NEVER INTERFERED IN SOVIET-JAPANESE AFFAIRS (NCNA, JANUARY 8-10). UNCLASSIFIED

7. IN A JANUARY 10 NCNA CORRESPONDENT'S ARTICLE, THE PRC REPLIED TO A JANUARY 3 PRAVDA COMMENTARY ON AGOLA. THE NCNA ARTICLE REITERATES THE PRC CHARGE THAT THE "SOVIET UNION HAS SINGLEHANDEDLY STIRRED UP AND EXPANDED THE CIVIL WAR IN ANGOLA." WHILE NOTING THAT THE "US IMPERIALISTS ARE NOT WILLING TO LAG BEHIND IN THE SCRAMBLE FOR ANGOLA, AND SOUTH AFRICA HAS TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO INFILTRATE INTO IT," THE ARTICLE MAINTAINS THE SOVIETS ARE THE "ARCH CRIMINAL." THE SOVIETS ARE CHARGED WITH USING THE ANGOLAN SITUATION IN AN ATTEMPT TO CONTROL THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND ALL OF AFRICA. ANOTHER NCNA REPORT NOTED WESTERN NEWS AGENCY REPORTS OF SOVIET WARSHIPS HEADING FOR ANGOLA AND CITED WHITE HOUSE REPORTS OF THE USG'S CONCERN OVER THIS DEVELOPMENT (NCNA, JANUARY 8-10). UNCLASSIFIED.
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